

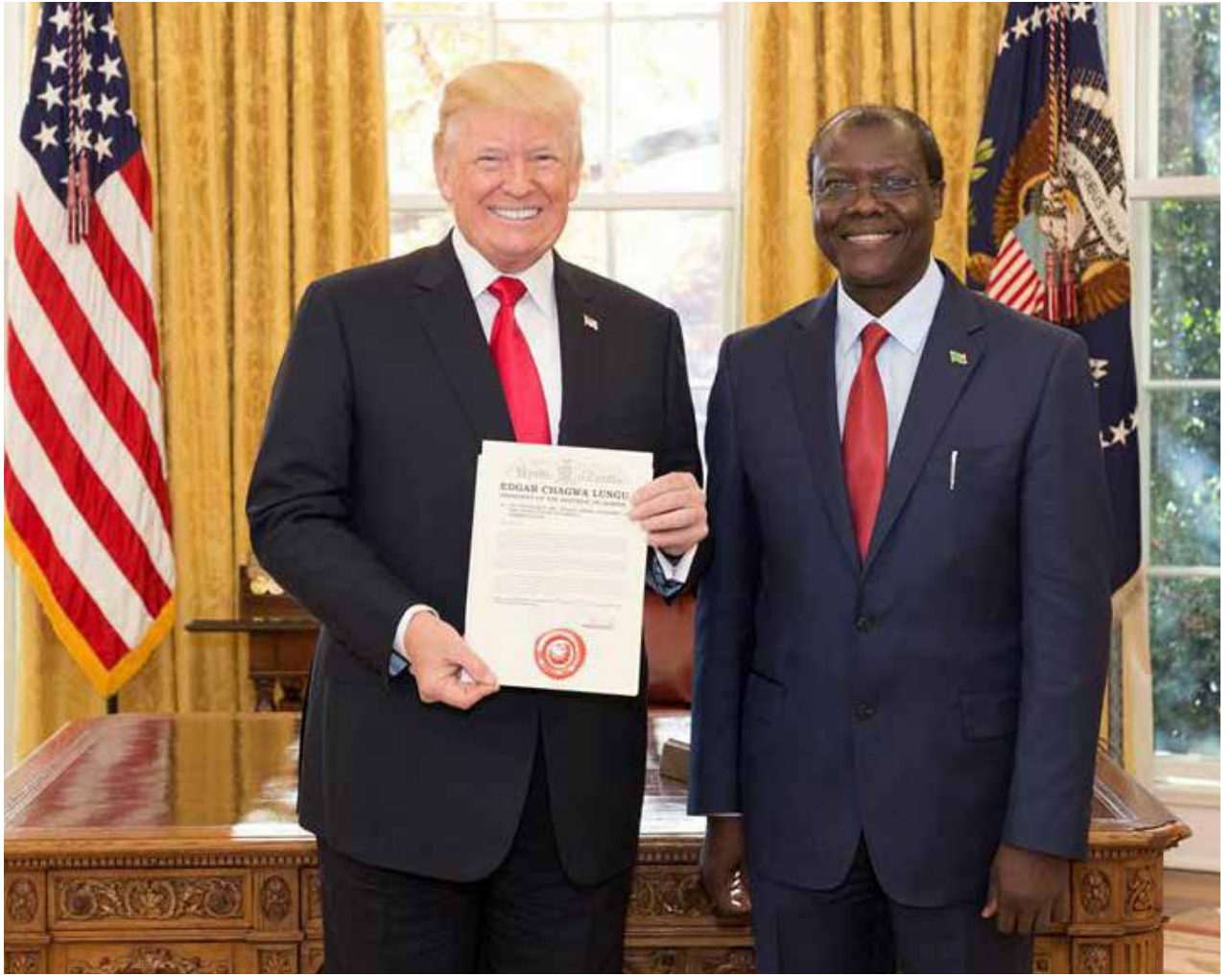
PS fails to produce original receipt for Dstv decoder that gobbled over K10,000

By Sipilisiwe Ncube
The Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee (PAC) yesterday heard how the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries purchased a Dstv decoder and paid subscription at K10,000 without supporting documents. This came to light when controlling officers from the ministry led by Permanent Secretary Dr David Shamulenge appeared before the committee to respond to audit queries cited in the 2016 Auditor General's report. The committee also discovered that most of the documents submitted by the ministry had questionable dates which did not match with the procurement dates. The fiasco begun when Chavuma member of parliament Victor Lumayi questioned Dr

Shamulenge on why the receipt obtained for the purchase of the decoder had a different date from that of when the decoder was purchased. *To page 3*

ZRA names Puma in fuel smuggling syndicate

By Mukosha Funga
The Zambia Revenue Authority has discovered an organised fuel smuggling syndicate through the Chirundu One Stop Boarder Post worth over K2.8 million in unpaid duty and taxes. *To page 4*



US President Donald Trump displays a letter of diplomatic credentials from former justice minister Dr Ngosa Simbyakula as Zambia's Ambassador to that country - Picture courtesy of the White House

PF has turned agriculture into risky business - ZNFU

To page 5

PRESIDENT'S TERM TOO SHORT - LUNGU ...10 years in power, better

MPs rebuke Mutati, reject presumptive tax proposal

By Zondiwe Mbewe
The Minister of Finance should be serious and stop destroying PF by bringing unnecessary taxes like this amendment which is in bad faith, just withdraw it tapaba insoni (don't be ashamed), Chishimba Kambwili told Felix Mutati in Parliament yesterday. But Home Affairs Minister Stephen Kampyongo said it was wrong for certain MPs to attend Parliament with mischievous ideas claiming to be representing the poor people. In Parliament yesterday, Mutati proposed an amendment to the income-tax Act, wishing to increase the presumptive tax. He said his proposal to increase the presumptive tax by K2 in mini buses and K32 on a 64-seater bus was to protect the erosion of tax. *To page 7*



Grevazio interviews President Lungu. Picture, courtesy of Smart Eagles

By Mukosha Funga
President Edgar Lungu says the presidential tenure must be increased to 10 years so that a Head of State does not worry about re-election immediately after assuming office. And President Lungu says he hates travelling but is making numerous international trips because he has no option. Meanwhile, Speaking during a special interview with Grevazio Zulu when he toured the newly refurbished ZNBC studios yesterday, President Lungu said criminal elements were stealing from government through the procurement of fertilizer. His said he was the most formidable candidate in PF to win an election. "I am the most formidable challenger for the 2021 election. *To page 5*

So they would like to eliminate me from the scene, and they are maneuvering and posturing and hoping that by some struck of luck I am ineligible, because I am here. I am interested in standing," he said. *To page 5*

Zambia's plans to keep borrowing forced us to put our negotiations on hold in August, says IMF

Story page 7

Immigration Department confirms deportation of Israeli investors

By Sipilisiwe Ncube

The Immigration Department has confirmed the deportation of Nefussy Eliezer, a shareholder in Gemcanton Investments Holdings Limited, an Emeralds Mine situated in Lufwanyama District on the Copperbelt province.

Department Public Relations Officer Namati Nshinka in a statement said Nefussy was deported to Namibia together with another employee identified as Sher Eli.

Nshinka stated that the department also removed 18 illegal immigrants from the country and further deported three foreign nationals including Nefussy.

“The Department also removed eighteen (18) illegal immigrants from the country and deported three (03) foreign nationals. Those removed include thirteen (13) Congolese in Chipata, two (02) Congolese and one (01) Chinese in Chingola, one (01) Namibian in Livingstone and one (01) Tanzanian in Mpika. Those deported include Mr. Nefussy Eliezer, a Namibian national of Israeli origin and a shareholders in Gemcanton Investments Holdings Limited, an Emeralds Mine situated in Lufwanyama District and Mr. Sher Eli, an Israeli employed by the same Company. The duo was deported in accordance with section 39(2) of the Immigration and Deportation Act No. 18 of 2010,” Nshinka stated. Nshinka stated that Nefussy was deported in accordance with section 39(2) of the Immigration and Deportation Act No. 18 of 2010.

“Mr. Nefussy Eliezer’s deportation to Namibia was effected on Tuesday, 28th November, 2017 at 15:00 hours via Simon Mwansa Kapwepwe International Airport in Ndola aboard an Ethiopian Airline flight. The said flight had a connection at Addis Ababa before proceeding to Windhoek, Namibia. Meanwhile, Mr. Sher Eli was already outside the country when his deportation warrant was signed. The third deportee is a Malawian national deported in Lusaka after paying a court fine for a drug related offence,” Nshinka stated.

He disclosed that the department also arrested 31 people for immigration offences countrywide.

“The Department of Immigration between 27th and 29th November, 2017 arrested a total of thirty one (31) persons

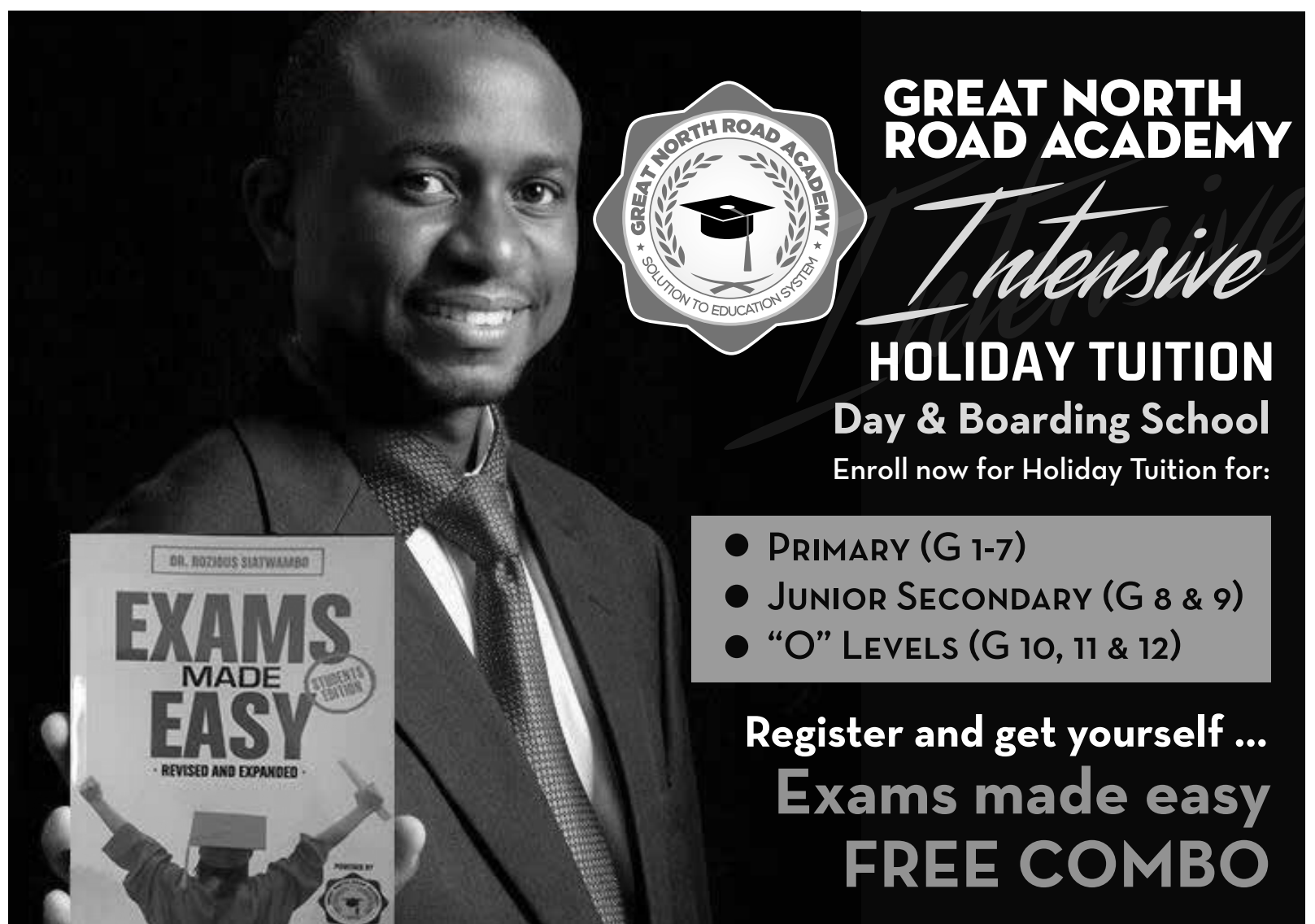
for immigration offences countrywide. These include sixteen (16) Congolese in Katima-Mulilo, one (01) Malawian and one (01) Congolese in Kasumbalesa, one (01) Congolese in Kazembe, one (01) Tanzanian in Mpika and one (01) Congolese in Mumbwa, all arrested for the offence of unlawful entry. Those arrested for

unlawful stay are two (02) Rwandese and one (01) Tanzanian in Solwezi, one (01) Malawian in Chipata, one (01) Congolese in Kitwe and one (01) Congolese in Luanshya,” Nshinka stated. He further disclosed that the department further arrested two Chinese nationals for engaging in employment without permits.

“Others are two (02) Chinese nationals in Lusaka arrested for engaging in employment without permits, one (01) Chinese in Solwezi arrested failing to observe conditions of his employment permit, and one (01) Zambian in Katima Mulilo, arrested for harboring sixteen Congolese nationals,” stated Nshinka.

“The Department, between 27th and 29th November, 2017 also secured a total of seven (07) convictions countrywide. These include the conviction of one (01) Angolan in Kalabo and one (01) Malawian in Lundazi, both for the offence of unlawful entry. Those convicted for unlawful entry and stay are one (01) Congolese in Chingola

and one (01) Malawian in Katete. Others are one (01) Tanzanian in Kasama convicted for the offence of failing to appear before an immigration officer on entry, one (01) Congolese in Chingola convicted for the offence of unlawful stay, and a Zambian employer in Katete fined K 5,000 for employing an illegal immigrant.”



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PS fails to produce original receipt for Dstv decoder that gobbled K10,000

From front page

"I think I just want a simple clarification from the PS, the letter to multi choice, the receipt for Dstv, the money was paid on 30th March 2016 and the receipt was issued on 10th October 2017. So I don't know whether this receipt was meant just for this committee or it is a correct document. One year eight months so I don't know how we can believe this receipt, Appendix number two," Lumayi observed. And Committee Chairperson Howard Kunda added to the question.

"Yes PS, the date when this invoice was prepared, it was this year in October on the 10th then you are referring to 2016 March, how is that possible and that the cheque, cheque number 000041 was issued in 2016 but the invoice was only prepared this year in October. How will we be able to believe that this is the correct thing that you are trying to give us?" he asked. In response, Dr Shamulenge said the mistake was as a result of misfiling or misplacement of the receipts. "Honorable chair it is a correct document. I think this was as a result of misplacement because if you can see, it also indicates the date on the invoice, the description indicates the date on the invoice for 2016. I think it was a misfiling or a misplacement," Dr Shamulenge responded. Kunda then demanded to know the expenditure details. "Could you please be clear, then also the description is talking about Dstv subscription but I have got a document here of the cheque, the name of the company which is MultiChoice, then expenditure details which says 'purchase of decoders for PS and subscription' so could you please clear these things," he asked. But Dr Shamulenge maintained his position saying it was a misfiling or the receipt or misplacement. "Honorable chair we are still on appendix two, which if you can allow me I am reading the description 'being payment made for

Dstv subscription on 30th March 2016 PRM plus HD-PVR cheque number 000041. It was an issue of misfiling or the receipt or misplacement," Dr Shamulenge said. Kunda pressed further and tried to simplify his question. "Yes PS, what I am trying to say is that the auditors findings on the same issue of unsupported payments is that it was purchase of decoders for PS and subscription. But the invoice is saying subscription, for how many months? That would cost K10,000. PS you are requested to answer questions," Kunda asked. Dr Shamulenge responded by saying that the purchased decoder was for the purpose of current affairs at the office and not personal. But Kunda demanded for the documents of proof. "Yes and the other issues, there is a date here for 10th October 2017 as compared to the time you issued the cheque, it was in March 2016, what is the connection there? These are documents that you did not provide to the auditor general when they were there. Now, is it something that we would be thinking that you are manufacturing just to prove to this committee that you have these documents available now? Is that the case?" Kunda asked. This time Dr Shamulenge requested that his Head of procurement who was present at the time steps in to clarify. And in clarifying the matter, Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries acting Head of Procurement Clement Mukuka said the original

receipt had faded, hence getting a new print out. "This was a procurement for a decoder for the PS's office which included a one year subscription. At a time the payment was made, as you may be aware, Dstv has got two ways of issuing out receipts. There is a print receipt which was obtained at that time and later on that receipt I think it had faded," Mukuka explained. "So hence that was the reason why that receipt could not be accounted for at the time of the auditors inspections. But however when this matter was raised, there was need now for my officers from the procurement unit to go to Dstv and get the actual

tax invoice which is now in question. That is why when you look at the description there, they are trying to refer to the time when this payment was made which was 30th March 2016 and this payment like I earlier on said it included the decoder as well as the subscription. But at that time, the receipt that was obtained was a printed one but this one, upon request that is when Dstv was able to issue out this invoice." Kunda later noted that the ministry's submission was lacking supporting documents. "What about other documentation? Because when you are doing purchase

of anything for government, there should be a trail, a paper trail. Why did you produce those documents to the auditors? We want the procurement department to tell us why they are not producing these documents and also why they are not keeping those documents properly because they are suppose to be kept even up to 20 years. The committee further noted that the Ministry had over paid subsistence allowances amounting to K205, 000 to 35 officers. "Overpayment of subsistence allowances amounting to K205,769 to 35 officers. You are saying the documents are there for verification, where

are these documents? We want clarity so we need to see that what you are talking about is correct here. Also PS, we have seen that these attachments that you have provided, most of them if not all of them have questionable dates in that they are written this year meanwhile the queries were in 2016. is it not an issue of trying to hide some things or just being reactive to the auditor general and not being proactive? You knowing that you are going to appear before this committee and that is why you are now panicking to give us letters. For example this appendix three, it was written 201th November 2017, why are you being reactive?"



Zambia a model democracy - Trump

By Mukosha Funga

United States President Donald Trump says Zambia is a model democracy in Africa. According to a statement issued by Zambia's First Secretary-Press and Public Relations in Washington DC Cosmas Chileshe, President Trump was speaking when he received Dr Ngosa Simbyakula's letters of

credence at the White House yesterday. Chileshe stated that President Trump also noted that Zambia and the United States shared common values and interests of fostering peace and stability with a sound record of commitment to democracy and democratic transitions. President Trump also applauded Zambia's

diplomatic engagements and commitment to providing peacekeepers to the United Nations mission in the Central African Republic. He noted that Zambia had continued to welcome refugees from its neighbouring countries and other African nations. "These actions help stabilize the region. The United States

values our partnership with Zambia and will continue to work with you to increase mutually beneficial trade and investment. We will continue with efforts to spur economic growth and promoting good governance and shared priorities between our two countries," President Trump said. "It is with great pleasure that I accept your letter of credence which establishes you as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Zambia, and I acknowledge receipt of the letter of Recall of your predecessor, Ambassador Palan Mulonda, who represented Zambia in the United States. I look forward to working with you to preserve and strengthen Zambia's leadership in promoting peace, stability, and good governance and advance our common interests to deepen the strong partnership. Welcome to the United States."

And Ambassador Simbyakula said Zambia and the US had maintained close bilateral relations based on mutual values and shared interests. He said the Zambian government appreciated the US' assistance through United States Agency for International Development (USAID) focusing on areas such as agriculture, education, health and economic growth. In addition, Zambia is an active participant in the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) which works closely with the Zambian Government in combating the HIV and AIDS pandemic. "The people and Government of Zambia also appreciate the benefits accrued from the work of the Millennium Challenge Account in Lusaka which is focusing on business reforms and improving water supply and sanitation. Furthermore, Zambia is grateful for the opportunity created by the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) to facilitate trade with the United States," said Ambassador Simbyakula.

Govt will set up cement plants, twice Dangote's size - Mutati

By Sipilisiwe Ncube

Finance Minister Felix Mutati says government will next year set up a new cement plant in Lusaka East which will be double the capacity of Dangote's investment. Speaking in parliament yesterday, Mutati also said another cement plant equal to Dangote cement plant would be set up at Ndola lime in two years time. "The house may wish to know that next

year, in Lusaka east, a new major cement plant will be operational with double the capacity of Dangote, bringing a lot more cement on the market. And in two years time, Ndola lime will also have a cement plant which will be equal to the capacity of Dangote. So with the increased capacity, Mr Speaker, we see that the impact of pricing is going to be tremendous. So for us the answer is to continue encouraging investment in the cement sector as a critical and major

influencer on the pricing," he said. Mutati said government was certain that increased cement production would lower the price of the commodity. "The principal function of pricing for cement lays in the supply. When Dangote cement came into the market, the price of cement drastically climbed down. We have in the mean time also Mr Speaker, encouraged substantial investment in the cement manufacturer," said Mutati.

ZRA names Puma in latest fuel smuggling syndicate

From front page

In a statement today, ZRA corporate affairs manager Topsy Sikalinda revealed that an agent, Chombe Gondwe, was importing the fuel on behalf of Puma Energy PLC although the company says the fuel is not theirs.

He stated Gondwe had been arrested and charged with smuggling for declaring Jet A1 fuel at the border, which is duty free, when he was transporting petrol and diesel in a bid to avoid paying taxes.

"In the latest scam, the importer falsely declared the consignment as Jet A1 fuel (which is duty free) when in fact it was petrol and diesel. During intelligence led patrols, the Zambia Revenue Authority (ZRA) Elite Anti-Smuggling Squad intercepted the first three trucks on the morning of 17th September 2017, as they were moving into Lusaka. After checking the documents presented by the drivers, the officers discovered that contrary to the declaration of Jet A1 fuel made at Chirundu, the trucks were in fact carrying petrol," Sikalinda stated.

"This led to a full investigation being commissioned and 10 other trucks with petrol and diesel were discovered to have been smuggled in a similar manner and no duties and taxes

were paid.

Our investigations have so far revealed that misclassification of Petrol as Jet A1 fuel was meant to facilitate smuggling of the consignment contrary to section 149 of the Customs and Excise Act CAP 322 of the laws of Zambia. Documentary evidence from our counterparts on the Zimbabwean side, the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (ZIMRA) confirms the nature of cargo as being petrol and not Jet A1 fuel as declared on the Zambian side." He stated that investigations had revealed that Gondwe was importing the fuel on behalf of Puma Energy PLC.

"It is important to note that ZRA now has a strong Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Zimbabwe Revenue (ZIMRA) Authority and other Revenue bodies in the region to help us curb all smuggling activities in the region. Investigations have further revealed that import declarations were done by the Agent at Chirundu on behalf of Puma Energy Zambia Limited who were found to have fully paid for the respective entries. All the 13 entries currently confirmed by investigations were imported under Puma Energy PLC and fully paid for as Jet A1 supplies," Sikalinda stated.

"Statements so far given indicated that three trucks were



originally supplied from the South Africa to a Mr Chombe Gondwe who has a contract of about 350,000 liters every month and investigations further revealed that 10 trucks were earlier supplied and received by Mr Chombe Gondwe before the current 3 being held by ZRA in Lusaka. We can confirm that Mr Chombe Gondwe was traced and arrested. He has appeared in court for the offence of smuggling contrary to section

149 of the customs and excise Act Cap 322 of the laws of Zambia." He stated that ZRA had started a process of recovering taxes from companies which had been avoiding paying tax in a similar fashion.

"This year in June, the government through ZRA sent an expert verification team to South Africa on a fact finding mission for importation of petroleum products. This was after concerns from the Energy

Regulation Board (ERB) over low levels of fuel uplifts or stock movements at Tazama leading to over stocking of the commodity and affecting storage space. It is important to note that the verification mission established that some oil Marketing companies were using SADC Certificates of Origin in order to avoid paying Taxes. ZRA has since started the process of recovering the taxes for the last 5 years," he stated.

"In October 2017, another truck was intercepted by the ZRA Elite Anti-Smuggling Squad carrying petrol with falsified documents indicating that the shipment was in transit to the DRC when in fact not. This truck is also currently held by ZRA. The current status is that the three trucks are currently in detention, Puma Energy has denied ownership of the products despite being cleared and paid for by the company at the time of entry."

He asked citizens with information on smuggling and tax evasion to come forward.

"As the Zambia Revenue Authority, We want to make a passionate appeal to all Zambians that we can make our country a better place if you help us with information on all smuggling and tax invasion activities that are happening in our organizations and communities. Acts like these have a potential to destroy the economy, distort the national fuel statistics hence, affecting planning and even grounding the entire economy because this create lapses in the planning and smooth restocking process. We want to make it clear that ZRA will not tolerate any form of smuggling or Tax evasion by any individual or company," stated Sikalinda.

Giving jobs to cadres is global – Frank Bwalya

By Mukosha Funga

Patriotic Front deputy spokesperson Frank Bwalya says there is no government anywhere in the world that does not prioritise awarding jobs to ruling party cadres.

And Bwalya says the ruling party will not waste time discussing newly formed National Democratic Congress as that will derail it from improving people's livelihood. Speaking when he featured on 5Fm's The Burning Issue yesterday, Bwalya said governments everywhere in the world prioritized their allies and cadres when awarding jobs.

This was after show host Zachariah Banda observed that only ruling party supporters were being appointed to boards of parastatals.

"There is no political party in the world that is going to disregard its associates, its members, its cadres from such appointments, there is no political party that will do that in the world. And no one should attempt to cheat anybody that 'ifi ku America takwaba, ifi ku England takwaba!' aweh! Nakwalesa kwine, efyo kwaba. Lesa asalile umo ukufyala umwana wakwe, not aba bambi (No one should lie that this doesn't happen in England or in America. Even in God's kingdom these things happen. He picked one person to bear his child, not these other ones)," Bwalya said, He said it would only be

a problem if those being appointed had no incompetent to serve in such positions.

"What we should focus on is competence. For people like Yamfwa Mukanga, he has been a politician for some time and people think that he is appointed just because he associates with the Patriotic Front, the man is an engineer and he brings a certain expertise and competence," Bwalya said.

"Such things can only be an issue of people being appointed have no capacity to participate in the governance and establishment of these institutions at that level, resulting in these institutions

failing to perform. If that were the case, the demand should be that the appointing authority consider appointing other people. I do believe that the people who are being appointed to be members of these boards have the capacity and required competence. You talked about our brother Mr Sunday Chanda (board member of the Zambia Airports Corporation). These boards require a mix, people with a legal background, engineering background, sometimes ordinary members of society could bring a certain contribution it could be a moral, psychological, group dynamics and so on."

And Bwalya said the PF would

not be distracted by parties like NDC which could soon return to the ruling party.

"This party is legally registered in this country and they have a right to operate and they have no right not to be talked about just as we also have no right not to be talked about. Nevertheless, their appearance on the political horizon, because they are still on the horizon, does not in any way modify our mandate, it doesn't in any way modify the promises that we made to the people of this country and it does not in any way change our level or indeed pace of performance. So our main focus is on the people of Zambia to deliver because

such delivery of the promises that we made translate into what Zambians are expecting from our government and I mean the PF led government in terms of improving their livelihood," said Bwalya.

"This is what we are focusing on. If anyone is expecting us to abandon what we should be doing for this country and focus on other political parties, a new political party that has been formed, I think they are mistaken. Since we came into power as the PF, there are many parties which have been formed and some have gone back to PF including [mine] from kumpoto to kubwato. That's how things go."

Nevers gets acquittal, put on defence in other charges

By Diggers Reporter

The Lusaka Magistrates' Court has acquitted MMD faction leader Nevers Mumba on a charge of willful failure to comply with applicable procedures relating to management of public funds which were donated by a Canadian firm, Barrick Gold.

However, Ndola Industrial Relations court deputy registrar Joshua Banda, sitting as Lusaka magistrate, has found Mumba with a case to answer for arbitrary facilitating the awarding of contracts to two Canadian private companies which were contracted to renovate the Zambia High Commissioner's residence in Canada.

In his ruling today, magistrate Banda acquitted Mumba on the the first count saying he did not flout procedure in disbursing \$122,000 Canadian dollars received from Barrick Gold for a cultural exchange programme.

He said the utilisation of funds was handled

above board and that Mumba could not be faulted, thereby dismissing the charge.

On the second and third count, magistrate Banda said Mumba should be placed on his defense for awarding contracts which witnesses said exceeded the threshold.

Witnesses had told the court that Mumba awarded the contract valued at \$18,000 Canadian dollars which exceeded the authorised threshold for renovating the residence.

Magistrate Banda said he was not obliged, at this stage, to state the reasons why Mumba was placed on his defense.

In the first count, it was alleged that between June 1 and December 31, 2011 at the Zambia High Commissioner to Canada, being a person whose functions concerned the use of public revenue, willfully failed to comply with laid down procedures in receiving and disbursing of Canadian dollar CAD \$ 122,229.85, a

donation to the Zambian government from Canadian private company called Barrick Gold Corporation.

In the second count, Mumba was alleged to have on October 1, 2009 and December 31, 2010 at the Zambia High Commission in Canada, being a person in the public service as high commissioner abused the authority of his office by awarding a contract for electrical works at the Zambia High Commissioner's residence in Canada to a Canadian private company called Restcon Construction Services at a cost of CAD \$9,000 without following laid down procedure.

In the third count, the it was alleged that Mumba, on the same dates abused the authority of his office by awarding a contract for carpeting at the Zambia High Commissioner's residence in Canada to a Canadian private company called Argos Carpet Limited at a cost of CAD\$ 19,850 without following laid down procedure.

By Mirriam Chabala

ZNFU president Jervis Zimba has urged President Edgar Lungu to scrutinise the people he has entrusted the agricultural sector with, saying they have been misleading him.

And Zimba says the PF government has turned agriculture into a risky business.

Speaking to News Diggers in an interview yesterday, Zimba said the Zambia National Farmers Union was worried about how the 2017/18 farming season would be pro farmers since the season was almost ending and some farmers had still not been paid.

“The e-voucher for this season is extremely worrisome because there

PF has turned agriculture into a risky business - ZNFU

are a lot of delays in paying farmers this season. If you look at the one million targeted farmers to be supported on the e-voucher and calculate, how will it be possible for 38 thousand farmers to be accessing everyday for 26 days? And mind you, anything after 26 December means that the season is over. Or if we put it within December, how practical is it that we will be

able to deal with 13 thousand farmers in a day?” Zimba wondered.

“We are really skeptical about this all thing and then we also have to remember that farmers also face some challenges as they deposit because some people can not swipe the cards due to faults and others don't even know how to swipe. So this whole thing has just been done too late. Our concern is that yes

we may manage to get to the one million target but we are very skeptical if we will get to the target because of FRA. This is not okay at all and if you remember the last time I talked about this I actually said that FRA is swindling farmers and they threatened to take me to Court but these are the things we were talking about where they promise to pay you every

two weeks and they paid a bit but have you seen now from July, those who collected in July now look if you calculate from July to date, you can see that for them to clear the bill, its taking them almost five months.”

Zimba said agriculture had now become a risk business and wondered how farmers would be able to survive under the conditions that government had subjected

them to.

“How do the farmers survive? And the complications of these things are that if you supply today like say in August or September and you are not paid then you keep borrowing from people telling them that you would pay them when FRA pays you but by the time you get that money from FRA, the farmers would have no money due to debts. So farming now is complicated and it's a risk business. It's actually a very sad status of affairs and to me actually what has happened in the total agriculture for this 2016/17 season is total economic sabotage to the whole country,” said Zimba.

“I think the people who advise the President of those figures have been found wanting and they should be brought to book because they have caused economic sabotage to the country. It's really an economic sabotage if you look at it and because of this economic sabotage which has happened, for us to pick up and begin to appreciate agriculture it will take us another three to four seasons. So we would appeal to the President to take action on the people who have caused this economic sabotage because the traders have gone back and 30 per cent of our farmers are under threat to the banks. The agribusiness, the tractor companies are going back and after this season by August we expect to see some lay offs in some farms and in the agribusiness sector. We are urging the President that those misleading him must be brought to book because to repair the damage now it will be huge.”

Presidential term too short, 10 years better - Lungu

From front page

“Obviously 10 years is the best time that you can have to deliver and I was sharing with President Uhuru [Kenyatta] over this same one to say ‘why don't they just give us 10 years and we go? One term, 10 years, you go. At that point you will not be worried about re-election, you will focus on growth of the economy and serious issues. But what is happening is that immediately you go in there, people begin challenging you and you begin defending yourself and again a ‘boxing’ match ensues, at the end of the day you don't do much work. But that's food for thought coming from me,” he said. He said if the court ruled him ineligible to stand, he would respect the decision, but hastily added that the Judiciary was subject to criticism if it went astray.

“But for 2021 my brother, if the matter in court says I am ineligible, I will not be eligible. If the court says I am eligible, I will be eligible and I don't know why this is becoming a very difficult issue, for me I believe in rule of law, I believe that the law is made by parliament, I believe that the law is interpreted by the courts of law and the law is enforced by us as Executive. We are also entitled to checks and balances, we check over each other and say ‘excuse me, what's going on?’ and I think that is how our democracy. There is no harm in talking about the Judiciary or the Legislature. There is no harm in talking about the executive. Why should it be the Executive to be always lambasted and criticised and accused of wrong doing?” President Lungu asked.

President Lungu said the courts must rule quickly on his eligibility so that he if he is disqualified, the party can find a substitute.

“For you to say I am raising controversy when I say I will stand in 2021.., I want to stand because my friends want me to stand so that we continue with the program but if the law says ‘you can't stand bwana’, the earlier they say so, the better so that we find a substitute. That's how these things go,” he said.

And President Lungu said mining companies only succeed at arm twisting

government in an election year.

“Arm-twisting [by mining companies] is there. For example, I have been very bold and I have told the mining companies that I will not be intimidated. One of the things they do, and they do it regularly is to tell you ‘so many jobs will be lost, they won't vote for you if you don't go in this direction’ but that can only work when we have an election coming,” President Lungu said.

“But now, if we mean well for the very worker, the nation and the republic, we are willing to tell the mining owners that ‘you can withdraw your investment, we will look for other investors’ because they are very good at that game of arm twisting.

Meanwhile, President Lungu said some people in the agricultural sector wanted to create a fertiliser crisis so that they could benefit from it.

“Right now I am coming from the office and I was learning that there was more urea on the market than D Compound for example and I said ‘but what farmer is this who brings in so much urea when what you need first is seed, then you need

D Compound, then Urea. So I have called for a meeting to say ‘what is going on with you guys?’ I say ‘hey let's go, we want to have fertilizer at the right time and somebody goes and buys urea when you are supposed to buy D-compound. So you see, when people talk about corruption, this is the corruption which they talk about. You stampede me and government into getting expensive commodities, fertilizer at short notice because we will need to bring in some emergency measures to bring in the right fertilizer.’ He said there were some corrupt elements in handling the procurement of fertilizer. “There are people who have made their money from emergencies and crisis situations but I will not allow that. I will ask Mr [Hibeene] Mwiinga, special assistant economics, I've asked Mr [Andrew] Chella to look into this matter and make sure we do it right. I will not accept failure which is induced by corrupt elements who want to steal money from government, that I will not accept,” he said.

Meanwhile, President Lungu also said he knew he travelled a lot but claimed he hated it.

“I travel too much yes, but I don't like travelling. It's not a contradiction, but I have to travel on behalf of the Zambian people. I was in Kenya, and in Kenya, I was told that Prime Minister Netanyahu Benjamin of Israel wants to have a bilateral with us and if I delegated, or if I allowed the ambassador to deal with that matter, obviously it wouldn't have been the right thing to do. In Israel, we have a partner and the partner wants to work with us. I was there early this year and when we met for your information, Prime Minister Netanyahu said Zambia should host the Africa-Israel summit which was initially intended for Togo in Ethiopia but for some reason never took off. And he says let's do this in 2018 and it only takes the Prime Minister and Head of State to negotiate that kind of deal,” he said.

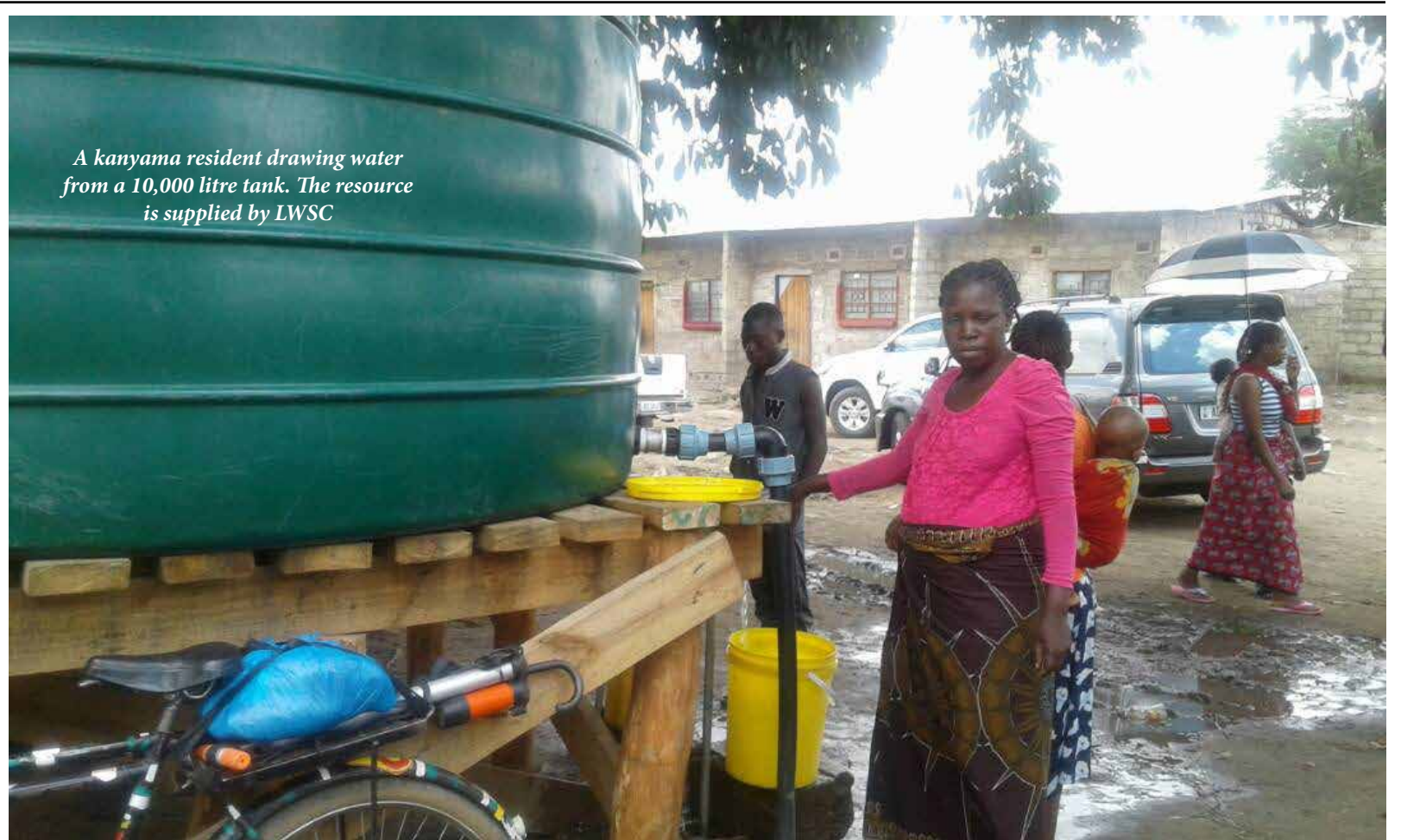
On corruption, President Lungu said it was illogical for people to question the source of his wealth when he was “one of the good lawyers” before becoming Head of State.

“State House has been accused of being very corrupt. ‘How can a journalist build

a house?’ to build a house are you corrupt? Somebody says no, ‘Lungu was a pauper, yes I was a pauper but I had a house, a roof, and I had small businesses running, I was constructing. Now somebody today says, he should account for his property, I have not failed to account for my property because people have been seeing me grow, and by the way I was a lawyer and I don't know whether there are so many poor lawyers, and I wasn't ‘in the middle of the road’ kind of lawyer, I was one of the good ones.

When Zulu asked if he was a top notch lawyer, President Lungu laughed and responded; “I don't think I was the top notch but you cannot say ‘where has he gotten the money from?’ you look at my jacket and say, where has he got the money from? C'mon! Let's be real! You say ‘that guy was a journalist, now he is driving’. How many journalists drive?”

The President said some people did not understand terminologies in the Auditor General's report, and therefore understood “misapplication” of funds as theft.



A kanyama resident drawing water from a 10,000 litre tank. The resource is supplied by LWSC

Mukata gives account of how he did NOT shoot his guard

By Diggers Reporter

Chilanga member of Parliament Keith Mukata says two attackers raided his law firm where one of them shot his security guard Namakambwa Kalilakwenda as another wrestled with his lover Charmaine Musonda.

And the former commerce deputy minister says it is unfortunate that people are labeling him and his lover as murderers.

Opening his defence today, Mukata who almost broke down asked "in the name of God, on what basis would I have murdered my own security guard with whom I had a close relationship?"

He narrated that on May 6, 2017, he arrived at his law firm, AKM Legal Practitioners around 14:00 hours and that his friend Suke Chile, a musician, visited him around 18:00 hours to organise a fundraising event for one of the hospices in Chilanga.

"He stayed for about an hour and I escorted him outside. After he drove off, I went to the gate to have a chat with the guard. The guard was with his friend who guards the next yard. On that day I knew that he hadn't eaten so I gave him some money, K200 and told him to share with his friend. I informed him that I was expecting visitos so I told him not to take long to usher in people," Mukata said.

He narrated that around 19:30, his uncle arrived in the company of his friend and they started chatting.

Mukata testified that around 20:30, Charmine arrived from Makeni but informed him that she was just passing time as she had a meeting a Raddison Blu. "At 21:00 hours, she left and came back about an hour 30 minutes later. Around 24:00 hours, uncle decided to take leave. Soon afterwards, Charmine also wanted to leave. She took her bag and a

basket which she had used to bring food for me that same morning," he said.

He narrated that as they were still in the office, his guard went to his window and alerted him that he had seen some intruders at the servants quarter.

"I told him to alert his friend, the guard next door as well. I told him to investigate and advise. I went to the back of the door, and I decided to alert a friend of mine honorable [Stephen] Kampyongo about the intrusion. Barely three weeks earlier, we had the same incident where people had entered our yard. I had called honorable Kampyongo again and he had helped by dispatching C5. When they came they were interrogating two people whom they met on the road," Mukata testified.

"But on the material day when I informed honorable Kampyongo the officers did not arrive fast. I had just finished talking to him on the phone when the guard reappeared at my window and he told me that after checking, he found that the small gate at the back was open. I told him that I had called for help so police reinforcement was on its way."

Mukata told the court that Charmine then went outside and he followed her behind.

"I saw a tall guy holding Charmine. He let go of her hands and he ran towards me. I was in the car and I applied brakes, I came out of the car and ran to the gate, there was a man wrestling with the guard. I realized that we were in a dangerous situation. I got my fire arm and fired two warning shots in the air. There was no reason to fire directly to the gate because there was a guard," he narrated.

He testified that he only fired warning shots to alert people that he was armed.

He said after he fired the second shot, he heard a gunshot from outside.

"I lost my nerve, I ran to the left, I was shouting for help. I said 'help! Bakabwalala (thieves)! I heard two gun shots from outside. I got scared, I realized that these people were carrying weapons. I noticed they were trying to pull the guard out of the gate. They were clustered at the gate, I was screaming for help and I heard the guard shout, 'Bo honourable! They have shot me!' He was crying in pain. At that point, I fired another shot and he was screaming for help. They ran away. I found the guard laying down, holding himself on the neck," Mukata told the court.

"I took away his hand and sat

him upright. I rushed outside for help. I had no idea where Charmaine was. I went to the VX vehicle and brought it near the guard. I wanted to lift him but he was too heavy and he was wincing with pain. I started calling for help, I wanted to get him to the vehicle. I called Charmaine and asked her to help. She was shaking, she held him and we tried to lift him but we failed."

He testified that he went to the restaurant next door and asked the owner, Kumar, to help him lift the guard but he refused.

"He refused and he closed the gate. He told me that he had already alerted police so I should wait for the police. I was shocked with the way he behaved. At that point I called honorable Kampyongo and informed him that the officers had not arrived and he said 'mwana, I am home but let me call them again,'" he said. Mukata told the court that when he returned to the law firm, he saw three cars approaching and assumed they were police officers.

Mukata, who almost broke down at this point, composed himself and testified that he went to the gate to receive them. "I told them, 'please gentlemen, my guard has been shot, come and help. They surrounded my

vehicle and came to me. They were led by Kumar and there was a man in a white t-shirt and another one who had dreads. The one with dreads told me to handover my gun and reverse my vehicle. I asked them if we could take the guard to a hospital but they said, 'you wanted to kill now you are telling us what to do?' the other gentleman pulled me and I realized that I was in a hostile situation. A2 (Charmaine) was standing by the gate and I reversed the vehicle. They got her and came with her inside. They ordered us to seat down," he said.

"They started removing things from the vehicles, others got a black bag pack, removed headphones, CDs and they dumped them near the BMW. The atmosphere was chaotic. People were aggressive and literally drunk. They had beers and were uttering unpalatable, insulting me. The insults were personal. They said I was going to be fixed."

He said he later came to realise that some of the men were police officers from Emmasdale. "They took the gun and cartridges and put them on a magazine. They started taking pictures of the passport, Dollars and Rands and they were saying that I would

get embarrassed. Charmine protested because they were throwing her makeup. I noticed that the guard was placed in the van. I didn't know at that point if he was alive. I complained about the harassment and I told one of the officers that maybe they planted things on me. But he told me to get out. The vehicles were unlocked and the crowd remained. The guard had already been taken to the hospital," Mukata said in uncoordinated speech punctuated by "ummmm", "aaahhhh".

Mukata became emotional as he explained how unfortunate it was that people could suggest that he murdered his guard who was loyal, elderly and well respected.

He said murder was a heinous crime and he would never have murdered his worker whom he loved and used to help with finances.

Mukata said he used to pay rentals for the deceased as his company, Men in Black Security company never paid him well.

Mukata said Namakambwa even applied for early retirement so he could employ him permanently and that he cleared the servant's quarter so that he could shift.

Lungu appoints Chenda, Katema into foreign service

By Joseph Mwenda

President Edgar Lungu has appointed former local government minister Emmanuel Chenda and former minister of community development minister Joseph Katema as Ambassadors to Zimbabwe and Italy respectively.

And President Lungu has also appointed Chola Katanga and Joel Njase as

new police Commissioners for Muchinga and Central Provinces, replacing Godwin Phiri and Lombe Kamukoshi who has been brought to Force Headquarters as Commissioner in charge of administration.

"I wish to congratulate you on your appointments into foreign service. The appointments have been done on merit and should be taken seriously. As

you go into foreign service, remember you will be representing the President of the Republic of Zambia and the country at large. Therefore, your immediate task as you take up your new positions is to further enhance the relations between Zambia and the respective countries where you are going," President Lungu said.

He told Katema to explore new

areas of cooperation between Zambia and Italy especially in the field of medicine where the appointee had expertise.

"I have known you for a long time and worked with you both in government, as a cabinet minister and in our party as a member of the central committee. I am confident that you will excel in your new appointment as Ambassador to Italy. Following your vast experience in the health sector as a medical doctor, I expect you to explore new areas of cooperation between the two countries in this respect," he said.

"As a fellow learned colleague," President Lungu told Chenda, "you are also not new to me. I have worked with you in the legal circles, in the party and now in government where you have served with distinction as cabinet minister in different ministries. As you take up your new position as High Commissioner to Zimbabwe, I expect you to strengthen the already existing bilateral relations between the two countries. I am confident that you will work to the best of your abilities with the new government to address issues of mutual interest."

The President also conferred retired Brigadier General John Albert Bulawayo with the status of "Ambassador" because of his long service in foreign missions.

"I have conferred you with this Ambassadorial title because you have exhibited unique skills in diplomacy. You have served over thirty-six years in different portfolios in the

public service both at home and abroad. this is a position well deserved and i have no doubt that you will continue being loyal to the appointing authority," he said.

He then told the newly appointed provincial police commissioners to exhibit professionalism.

"Let me now address the men in uniform. Your appointments come with huge responsibility and at a time when members of the public expect to see a disciplined police service that responds with efficiency to service delivery. Mr Joel Njase, you have worked for the Zambia Police service for close to twenty-one years having joined as an inspector in 1997. I am impressed with your CV and I have no doubt that your vast experience will contribute to bringing change in the operations of the Zambia police service now that you will be serving at the highest level in the province as Commissioner of Police. I urge you to continue working hard," said President Lungu.

"Mr Chola Katanga, you equally have an impressive record of service in the Zambia Police. Just like your colleague, Mr Njase, you have worked with loyalty, commitment and dedication for close to twenty-one years. I have very high expectations of you. as a senior police officer, you already know the operational issues on the ground and as a well vest administrator, I expect you to bring solutions to the many issues affecting your subordinates. Once again congratulations to you all!"

Politics, good and malice

By Dr Canisius Banda

Evil is amongst us. Everywhere you look, there is darkness. And this evil comes in the form of human beings. They smile at us when in their hearts they carry only ill will for us. Not all human beings mean well for us. Some want us disgraced, humiliated and crushed. Some of these people are after me.

In my life I have come across my share of many of these shady creatures and their

dealings. Nonetheless, it is when it is darkest that light must stand strong and shine even brighter. It is when evil is everywhere that good must assert itself. As Pilgrims, vessels of God, we shall suffer all manner of persecution. This is to be expected, for as warriors of light, darkness is always plotting against us.

We must never cower. We must never relent in our efforts to occasion good.

We must fear not. We must never give up. We must stay focused on our work in His honour endeavouring to build lives all the time.

A picture is circulating online said to be me. It is NOT. That is the work of the enemy. It is photoshopping.

There are people out there, who for some reason, want me down. Be wary.

Next they will publish or post a video of a man having sex with a dog and they will say look what Dr Canisius BANDA is doing now!

They might even allege that Dr Canisius BANDA has made a Lozi goat pregnant.

Be on guard. Dr Canisius BANDA is teaching, touching lives, building bridges and saving souls, bettering the world. Not this nonsense they are posting. Ignore all that. And pray for me.

My Facebook account is under severe cyber attack. It was hacked into on 25 November 2017.

Since then it has been hijacked by these miscreants and they are now using it to spread lies, falsehoods and hate speech on my behalf all as part of an orchestrated smear campaign against me.

Be assured, I am well. The Lord is with me. He shelters always.

The struggle against poverty and all forms of human bondage is our calling. It shall continue.

Aluta continua! Do NOT be dissuaded by the murmuring of the winds. Stay focused.

Darkness is everywhere. Our journey is long but worthy. We bear light. We have God in our sails.

Even under attack, we remain safe.

Remain prayerful, my friends. We are aware that for those that trust in God anything that happens happens for their own good. And that we must give thanks in every circumstance.

So I am grateful for all this. We will never cease doing right.

Dr Canisius BANDA
Former UPND Vice President



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We halted negotiations with Zambia in August - IMF

By Mukosha Funga

The International Monetary Fund says discussions with Zambia were put on hold in August after government unveiled large borrowing plans which threatened sustainability. This is contrary to what Minister of Finance Felix Mutati has been telling Parliament.

At a media briefing in Washington yesterday, IMF director communications department Gerry Rice revealed that discussions with Zambia were halted in August this year.

"Where we are on Zambia is that discussions on a new arrangement were put on hold in August of this year after the authorities unveiled large borrowing plans that we believe threatened that sustainability. So during the Annual Meetings and during a follow-up set of meetings actually led by our Africa Department Director Abebe Selassie, who made a recent visit to Zambia, the authorities expressed their will for a speedy re-engagement with the Fund," Rice said.

He said the IMF was waiting for the Zambian government to provide greater clarity on credible borrowing plans consistent with debt sustainability.

"Where we stand is that while progress has been made on several elements of a prospective program, the discussions will need to progress and provide greater clarity, including on fiscal policy commitments and credible borrowing plans consistent with debt sustainability," said Rice.

"So we're just essentially waiting for further data and details on the government's external borrowing plans, and then we would field a staff visit to update the macro framework and discuss the

way forward."

But on October 19, Mutati told Parliament that the IMF bailout request had not failed, as negotiations were still ongoing.

"Mr Speaker, let me just borrow a common phrase, and this common phrase is called bailout. And let me just make it clear to

this August house that this phrase called the bailout has not failed. The IMF bailout has not failed because our program has not yet been taken to the IMF board, that's number one. Number two Mr Speaker, what was taken to the board is called Article 4 surveillance. This is where the staff from IMF carryout

an assessment on the economy on its performance, its financial policies, engage with government, engage with parliamentarians etc," said Mutati.

"So when we engage with IMF, they said we needed to determine the new path for the debt and in order to determine a new path,

we need information and data which we are working together with them (IMF) and they will be back in a few weeks time so that we can have a debt profile that is based on debt sustainability going forward. We can have a debt profile that not only supports growth but also ensures that we do not shock

the economy. Once we have done that Mr Speaker, then we will be able to move forward on this particular issue. Mr Speaker, this, we are determined to do because at the end of the dividends for stability and growth, we will accrue to the ordinary person, the ordinary people of Zambia."

MPs rebuke Mutati, reject presumptive tax

From front page

However, before the amendment could be agreed on, leader of the opposition Jack Mwiimbu shot it down and was joined by other MPs who also objected to it.

"Madam chairperson, I move that Clause 16 on page nine, in lines 11 to 23 be deleted as per the notice of amendment which was circulated. The minister of finance is saying that this increment is neither here nor there, if that is his argument then there is no need for this increment. But the fact of the matter is that public transporters have been lumbered with a lot of taxes. And these taxes are being transferred to the ordinary passenger and traveler in this country. These public transporters are being charged insurance, road tax, there are so many taxes which they are being charged. As a result of these various licenses, the cost of doing business as a public transporter is high. They are transferring these costs to the ordinary citizens," Mwiimbu said.

"Multitudes of people are walking because they cannot afford public transport. This tax is not serving any purpose. He can do away with it."

Kambwili said PF members should not forget that the party was formed to lower taxes and

help the poor.

"I want the people on the right to reflect on whether indeed they are running the Patriotic Front that we founded with President Micheal Sata. I want my colleagues on the right to reflect seriously about the intention of forming the Patriotic Front and getting into government. One of the intentions was for lower taxes and putting more money in the pockets of the poor. The question that we should ask ourselves today, 'who uses public transport?' Some of them can stand today and say I support because they have government vehicles, they have fuel allowance which they are given, so they don't feel the pinch and honourable Mutati..." Kambwili said before he was interrupted by Copperbelt Minister Bowman Lusambo.

Deputy Speaker Catherine Namugala moved in and ordered Lusambo to go back to his seat, she further guided Kambwili not to draw his colleagues into the debate.

"Ya! Bwafya... Anyway what I was saying is people must reflect. They should not forget the basis for which PF was formed. If indeed government needs money to run the social services, why go and buy a fire engine at \$1 million each? And after you buy



expensive fire engines, you want to buy expensive ambulances then you want to transfer these costs to the poor people. Why can't you introduce a tax on GX vehicles that are driven by ministers and leave the poor people alone? You can't come, stand here and say 'I support the proposal, what is K2?' people feed on K2 in my constituency," said Kambwili.

"So be serious, don't destroy PF

by bringing unnecessary taxes. PF belongs to the poor people. Minister this amendment is in bad faith just withdraw it. Tapaba insoni just withdraw. Your conscious must tell you that this is bad. A K2 Is a lot of money for the poor."

Meanwhile Kampyongo said a consultative process was carried out with the stakeholders before Mutati could come up with the

proposal.

"This proposal to adjust the presumptive tax was not done without consultations. If honourable Jack Mwiimbu had cared to find out, the stakeholders who are the operators themselves were consulted. These thresholds which the minister of finance is proposing was agreed upon. We come to this house to debate based on facts, not assumptions and hearsay.

"There is no country madam Chairperson were you don't see people in the morning waking up from their homes, walking to different places. Even in Europe were the transport system is so perfect, you will see people walking back and forth for different activities," said Kampyongo.

"So lets not pretend here that even if there was no this measure there will still be no people walking back and forth to different places. We are a responsible government that wants to make sure that our people and the travelling public are looked after. The minister of finance has been very considerate. We are the pro poor government and we shall continue to be that. So madam Chairperson we are not going to accept people coming here with mischievous ideas of trying to pretend as if they are the only ones who care about our poor people. We are supporting the honourable minister of finance with this measure so that we can serve our people better."

Refugee aid dries up as more flee DRC for Zambia

By Joseph Mwenda

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) says Zambia has only received US\$13.6 million, which is only a quarter of the aid which the agency requires to support the huge volumes of refugees entering the country.

This is contained in a statement released by UNHCR head of public relations Kelvin Shimo today.

"The number of refugees fleeing militia violence in south-eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and arriving in Zambia has crossed the 12,000 mark - with more than 8,400 arrivals in the

last three months," Shimo stated.

"Humanitarian activities in the DRC and Zambia are hugely underfunded. Of the US\$ 236.2 million required to meet the needs of refugees, internally displaced and others in the DRC, only US\$54.6 million has been received so far. In Zambia, only US\$13.6 million has been received. In both cases, this is less than a quarter of what is needed."

He said Zambia's refugee camps were filled to capacity with more war victims still expected from Congo.

"Zambia currently hosts over 65,000 refugees including some 33,000 from the DRC. Some 80 per cent of the

refugees are women and children, driven out by the extreme brutality of rampaging militias, with reports of civilians being killed, women being raped, private property looted and houses torched. Most of the refugees are coming from the Haut-Katanga and Tanganyika Provinces of the (DRC). The majority of the refugees have crossed into the province of Luapula and are hosted at the Kenani Transit Centre in Nchelenge, about 90 kilometres from the border. People are also entering in other northern and north-western provinces of Zambia," said Shimo.

"According to refugees more people

could be forced to leave the DRC for Zambia, as fighting is intensifying. Some 4.1 million people remain displaced inside the DRC. Kenani Transit Centre, which currently hosts over 8,000 refugees is filled to maximum capacity. Zambia has made more land available for a new site to ease pressure on the existing site and accommodate new arrivals. However, UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, and its partners are in urgent need of resources to develop the new site and for refugees to receive life-saving assistance including food, shelter, water and sanitation and access to health services."

A good Constitution is useless when lawbreakers are in power

"It has become quite clear to everybody; anyone who has cared to study the Constitution has come to the conclusion that our 2016 amendment of the Constitution was hurriedly done," so says Minister of Justice Given Lubinda.

He adds that this is not a time for anyone to apportion blame, but to acknowledge the fact that it was an exercise that we all carried out as a country. But soon as he warned against blaming one another for a shambolic job, he pointed his finger at civil society organisations that were pushing for its quick release.

"There were some people who were really agitating for the Constitution to be adopted without any amendments, and others were pushing that the amended Constitution was being delayed. So as a country we went ahead and adopted that Constitution, but now it has become clear that there are some articles in the Constitution that don't speak to each other. There are gaps, which lawyers refer to as lacunae, which require refinement. Already, in February or March, I appealed to various stakeholders and Zambians to make submissions to the Ministry of Justice for us to start the process of refining the Constitution. I will be making a ministerial statement in Parliament to inform the country on the status, but it is true that we

News Diggers!

Ear to the ground

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are making moves to refine the Constitution and we have made tremendous progress," said minister Lubinda.

Firstly, we agree with Mr Lubinda that our Constitution was released in a hurry. Many concerns raised by stakeholders were not addressed. We recall that that the Non Governmental Organisations Coordinating Council (NGOCC) made serious observations that there was cherry-picking of Articles by the PF which the ruling party wanted to have adopted in the final document. But before this and many other concerns were addressed and amicably resolved by stakeholders, the chapter was closed, the document was lumped on the floor of the National Assembly. Without even reading or understanding the provisions, the MPs cast their votes in approval, some of them, without even realising that the document was barring them from

returning to Parliament because they did not have grade 12 certificates.

Almost immediately, government spent hundreds of thousands of kwacha to organise an unprecedented public event at the National Heroes stadium where President Lungu was to assent to the Constitution. Dance troupes were called in to perform, as well as some famous gospel singers because at that time, the President was highly regarded as a God fearing man. During the signing ceremony, President Lungu bragged that the PF was an action-oriented party and he was eager to deliver. All in a hurry, President Lungu whipped out his pen to turn the proposed draft constitution into law; and we actually recall that he hurriedly put a wrong date on the document before the Chief Justice corrected him.

What followed were praises from hand-to-mouth

political party leaders, hero-worshipping President Lungu for exhibiting rare courage of giving Zambians a 'new' Constitution, something which previous presidents had failed to do. They saluted him for releasing a "people driven Constitution that would stand a taste of time".

But here we are already going back to the drawing board; here we are now blaming stakeholders for the mess. Everybody can now see that the President, his ministers and PF members of parliament did not care about the contents of the Constitution. They simply wanted to gain political mileage out of it.

Lubinda can claim that NGOs pushed government into hurriedly releasing the document, but these are the same NGOs that previously pushed Levy Mwanawasa, Rupiah Banda, and Michael Sata, they never put a gun to the heads of any of these

past presidents to release the Constitution without due consideration of its provisions. The truth is that the PF wanted to make the release of the Constitution a campaign song ahead of August 2016. They wanted to present President Lungu as Superman to the voters. They wasted public resources to produce a bad Constitution meant to deceive the people and they want to waste some more now through the so-called "refining" process.

Secondly, we also agree with Mr Lubinda that our Constitution has serious flaws. It has confusing clauses that contradict each other. Some of these ambiguous clauses are responsible for creating a divided nation that we are still struggling to unite, a year after the elections.

But that being the case, we don't think a good Constitution will change anything in Zambia under the PF administration. We

already have some good laws in this country which have publicly been disregarded by those who wield political power. Police officers are also enforcing laws according to the desires of those who are in government. In Zambia, the law is what the PF says it is, not what is in the Constitution. So of what value will a good Constitution be? Even if we correct the clauses and make them speak to each other, how will that help with government leaders who don't speak to the Constitution?

Already, we have a President who is on record saying he does not support the ruling made by the Constitutional Court against ministers who illegally stayed in office after dissolution of Parliament. How can his ministers obey court orders if the President doesn't respect Judiciary? And just how special is President Lungu that only his interpretation of the law should matter? Which special law school did the President attend which president Hildah Chibomba and her Constitutional Court team missed?

Yes, we have heard President Lungu boasting that he is a learned senior member of the bar, but maybe that's where the problem is because even at the bar there are rules. You can't start insulting people just because you are a big buyer.

Of presidential terms and the quest for eternal hegemony

By Friday Hamamba Hanene
IT'S almost utterly unthinkable for political dynasties, especially on our beloved continent, Africa to willfully relinquish the reins of power after serving their mandate. Little wonder the likes of Madiba have etched names both indelible and noble, in the annals of history. Posterity bestows unto them a crown of statesmanship and they are not looked upon with a frown. In our modern era, we have statesmen like Lt. Gen. Dr. Ian Khama Seretse Khama who whilst visiting Zambia during the commemoration of the 53rd Independence Anniversary, declared thus; "... As most of you are aware, this is going to be possibly the last opportunity for me to be able to share a moment like this with you because my own term will be concluding in about five months' time and I have no intention of amending my country's Constitution so that I can prolong my term in office". Meaning in about four months' time (around March, 2018), he concludes his term although Botswana is scheduled to go to the polls in 2019. He has also been recently quoted as saying, "We are presidents not monarchs". Clearly, he implies that presidential tenures have limits

unlike those of monarchs which are life-long.

And Egypt's Abdel Fattah Al Sisi had this to say to CNBC regarding his tenure of office;

"It doesn't suit me as a president to stay one more day against the will of the Egyptians. This is not talk for TV, those are principles I embrace and am keen on them"

"We will not interfere with the constitution. I am with preserving two four year terms"

So we still have a few good men committed to upholding the rule of law and the respect of the constitution. Way to go your excellences! May the others emulate you.

Our own ECL is alleged to have made the following pronouncements during an interactive meeting with the Zambia Association of Manufacturers;

"...Together, we can achieve industrialization with unity of purpose. We can transform Zambia into an industrialization hub. So let us all rise to the occasion and ensure that industrialization becomes a reality in our lifetime, or in my term of office. And by the way I am only going up to 2021."

But again he left the masses guessing

when he added, "Yes, I am only going up to 2021, unless otherwise. Thank you very much, God bless you."

There are raging debates relating to the legal interpretation of his term(s) and the subsequent implication on his eligibility for 2021. Our plea is that whatever outcome, as usual in Zambia, 'Peace be still'.

We have witnessed a number of countries where presidents seek to prolong their stay at the helm using lacunas in the constitution or just outright violation of the laws. They seek eternal hegemony.

The major problem is that most leaders when placed at the apex of power will indulge in unfettered plunder and all manner of illegality such that when their time in office is up they are too deep into their mess and they fear going to the prisons they failed to make habitable even for the vilest of folks at odds with the law. So they, by any means possible, seek to cling to their thrones 'Till death do us part' and in the process commit more crimes. Coupled with greed and the lure of the sweet seat therein comes all the brouhaha of presidential terms and the quest for eternal hegemony. It is said, power corrupts and that absolute power corrupts absolutely!

The weak constitutions of many

countries and the lack of principles among office bearers, those who swear to uphold the supreme law of the country are also an intoxicating recipe for baking hard core dictators. Blind and false hero-worshiping by the so called supporters or cadres make the seasoning. Here one should take a leaf from Robert Gabriel Mugabe who, all along thought the citizenry was with him only to be awakened to the rude shock that the situation was to the contrary. A development akin to 'The Emperor's New Clothes' fable- his cohorts in ZANU-PF were dancing with jubilation at his downfall and ready to cast the first stone at him! Sadly enough, most despots start as heroes, patriots bent on serving their nations but wind up as villains and we, the citizens, are an accessory to their transformation. We tolerate and nurture them until too late by assuming a reactive posture instead of being proactive.

A bad flower should be nipped in its bud by any legal means and never be allowed to blossom.

Nevertheless, all tyrannical dynasties no matter how seemingly invincible have an inevitable rendezvous with catastrophe and erstwhile heroes end up as zeroes. There will always come a time when...

Finally, a gleam of a new dawn glows-

The wind of change blows.

A silver lining for a cloud once so dark

Signals a turning mark

As all things by some divine reason, Sure have their season.

For who can defy the hand of fate, And circumvent that allotted date?

A time sure comes when despots fall-

When they yield to that call, To be uprooted like repugnant weeds

And answer for their deeds.

One can only abuse power for so long

But just like so bad a song, Sooner than realized, away it will fade

And no ceremonial farewell ever bade.

To the reigns, "It's till death do us part", they vow

And coerce all unto them to bow

But, states fall, arts fade- and Nature doth not die-

George Gordon Byron didn't lie. Soon their world shrivels to the size of a soccer ball

When finally these despots fall; Unfortunately, such folks never learn to leave the seat,

It's eternal reign that they yearn for no matter the heat.

Zimbabwe's new president Emmerson Mnangagwa has named his cabinet, appointing senior military figures to high-profile positions.

Mr Mnangagwa has made Sibusiso Moyo, the general who appeared on state TV after the recent military takeover, the new foreign minister.

The head of Zimbabwe's air force, Perence Shiri, was named the minister of agriculture and land affairs. Mr Mnangagwa was sworn in last week after Robert Mugabe agreed to resign. The man who ruled Zimbabwe for 37 years stepped down after the military intervened following the sacking of Mr Mnangagwa as vice-president.

Military men get key Zimbabwe cabinet jobs

While the new president has chosen to keep many of Mr Mugabe's former cabinet ministers in office, Mr Mnangagwa has also awarded positions to military leaders who have previously supported him. Aside from Mr Moyo and Mr Shiri, leaders of the powerful war veterans' association, who pushed for Mr Mugabe to go after the military intervention, also

got cabinet jobs.

Chris Mutsvangwa, who heads the group, is now in charge at the information ministry.

The appointments led government critic Tendai Biti to suggest that Zimbabweans were "wrong" to have hoped for change.

Perence Shiri is a figure notorious for having led the military operation against opponents of Mr Mugabe

in Matabeleland in the early 1980s.

The operation resulted in the killing of an estimated 20,000 civilians.

Mr Mnangagwa - who had fled Zimbabwe earlier this month only to return to a hero's welcome - has for decades been part of the country's ruling elite.

His dismissal as vice-president - after he was accused of plotting to take

power - led the ruling party and the army to intervene.

On 14 November, army tanks rolled into Zimbabwe's capital, Harare, detaining Mr Mugabe and placing him under house arrest.

The military denied it that was staging a coup and maintained that it was acting against "criminals" surrounding Mr Mugabe.

It came after a power

struggle over who might replace the president, with Mr Mnangagwa and Mr Mugabe's wife, Grace, on opposite sides.

Despite pledging a "new destiny" for Zimbabwe, Mr Mnangagwa is still associated by many with some of the worst atrocities committed under the ruling Zanu-PF party since the country gained independence in 1980. *BBC*

Japan's Emperor Akihito to abdicate in April 2019

Japan's Emperor Akihito will step down on April 30, 2019, the prime minister announced Friday, the first retirement in more than two centuries in the imperial family believed to be the world's oldest.

Shinzo Abe said he was "deeply moved" at the "smooth decision" taken after a special meeting of the Imperial Council to decide on the date for the popular 83-year-old to step down for health reasons.

"The government will make utmost efforts to ensure that the Japanese people can celebrate the emperor's abdication and the succession of the crown prince," added Abe.

Akihito's eldest son, 57-year-old Crown Prince Naruhito, is expected to ascend the Chrysanthemum Throne the next day.

The emperor shocked the country last year when he signalled his desire to take a back seat after nearly three decades, citing his age and health problems.

There have been abdications in Japan's long imperial history dating back more than 2,600 years but the last one was more than two centuries ago.

Akihito is the 125th person to sit on the Chrysanthemum Throne since Emperor Jimmu, said to be a descendant of the legendary sun goddess Amaterasu.

Emperors have played a crucial role in the country's native Shinto religion, conducting various annual rites and prayers for the prosperity of the nation.

- Female succession - There is no republican movement to speak of in Japan and the emperor and the royal family enjoy the admiration of the vast majority of the country.

But Akihito's unexpected move presented a challenge since there was no law to deal with an emperor retiring from what is



usually a job for life -- and it reignited debate about allowing women to ascend the traditionally male-only throne.

In June, the parliament passed a one-off rule allowing the ageing emperor to step down.

The abdication must take place within three years and applies only to Akihito, who has been treated for prostate cancer and has also had heart surgery.

Some worried that changing the rule to allow any emperor to abdicate could put Japan's future monarchs at risk of being subject to political manipulation.

The status of the emperor is sensitive in Japan given its 20th century history of war waged in the name of Akihito's father Hirohito, who died in 1989.

Akihito was born in 1933 just as Japan was embarking on its militaristic sweep across Asia, and was 11 when the war ended in defeat.

His father was allowed to remain on the throne after Japan's defeat, but his status was downgraded from semi-divine sovereign to a figurehead with no political power.

Akihito embraced the role and tried to use it to help

heal the scars of the war while remoulding one of the world's oldest monarchies for a democratic age.

Even before he assumed the throne, Akihito broke with tradition when he married the daughter of a wealthy flour magnate in 1959, becoming the first imperial heir to wed a commoner.

The emperor and his wife Empress Michiko are seen as being the more accessible face of a monarchy that largely remains in the shadows, unlike the British royals.

Akihito is barred from commenting on politics, but he has over the years hinted

at his own anti-nationalist views.

Speaking at a memorial marking the 70th anniversary of Japan's surrender, Akihito expressed "deep remorse" for the country's actions in World War II.

The looming abdication has reignited concerns about a potential succession crisis.

There are no more eligible male heirs after the 11-year-old son of Crown Prince Naruhito's younger brother Akishino.

Japan's centuries-old succession would be broken if that son, Hisahito, does not have a male child.

In response, Japan's parliament has called for a debate on giving women a bigger role in the male-dominated monarchy.

The idea -- including the possibility of letting women ascend the throne -- is popular with ordinary Japanese, but it is vehemently opposed by traditionalists.

Female imperial family members lose their royal status upon marriage to a commoner, a point highlighted by the engagement of one of Akihito's granddaughters, Princess Mako, to her college sweetheart. *AFP*

Jay-Z gets real about infidelity and how therapy helped him

Jay-Z is one of the best rappers of our time, and until now, he's been silent about much of his personal life, especially when it comes to his marriage to Beyoncé. Until now.

In a riveting interview with *T: The New York Times Style Magazine*, the rapper opens up about hard-hitting topics ranging from infidelity to being a black man in Trump's America. He also admits to going to therapy as a way of helping him through some of his darkest moments.

"I grew so much from the experience," he said when asked what it was like to be in therapy. "But I think the most important thing I got is that everything is connected. Every emotion is connected and it comes from somewhere. And just being aware of it. Being aware of it in everyday life puts you at such a ... you're at such an advantage. You know, you realize that if someone's racist toward you, it ain't about you."

The rap veteran went on to say, "You have to survive. So you go into survival mode, and when you go into survival mode, what happens? You shut down all emotions. So even with women, you gonna shut down emotionally, so you can't connect." This led the 47-year-old into revealing that, for him, shutting down ultimately led to infidelity.

Speculation surrounding the status of the power couple's relationship intensified after a video surfaced of Beyoncé's sister, Solange, and Jay-Z getting into a physical altercation in an elevator during the 2014 Met Gala. Rumors surfaced that Solange had been upset about Jay-Z's unfaithfulness. It was an unsettling event that left many fans confused. In response to the infamous fight, Jay-Z more recently shared with ABC News in August, "We've had one disagreement. Before and after, we've been cool," the 47-year-old said. "That's my sister. Not my sister-in-law, no, my sister. Period."

When Beyoncé released her *Lemonade* album, songs such as "Hold Up" and "Don't Hurt Yourself" led people to believe that these songs were about Jay-Z's infidelity, with edgy lyrics such as "If you try this s*** again, you gone lose your wife."

Jay-Z's Grammy-nominated 4:44 felt like somewhat of a response album to Beyoncé's *Lemonade*. In his song, "Kill Jay-Z" he says, "Let the baddest girl in the world get away/I don't even know what else to say ... I don't even know what you woulda done."

Addressing those emotions during his interview with NYT executive editor Dean Baquet, Jay-Z acknowledged that both albums were actually made around the same time and gave each of them a chance to share their personal feelings and truths. "[I was] really proud of the music she made, and she was really proud of the art I released. And, you know, at the end of the day, we really have a healthy respect for one another's craft. I think she's amazing." *Yahoo*



This empowering photo shoot aims to normalize breastfeeding in the black community. Nine breastfeeding moms from Alabama set an example to others in their community. Yahoo

Mayweather 'adopts' panda, names it after himself

He hardly has a reputation as the cuddly type, but Floyd Mayweather displayed his softer side as he adopted a baby giant panda in China -- and promptly renamed it "TMT Floyd Mayweather".

The 40-year-old American boxing star will, however, have to leave the panda at its home in southwest China and the 100,000 yuan (\$15,000) adoption fee paid by him and another sponsor will go to the research centre where it lives.

"TMT" is Mayweather's brand, short for "The Money Team", a nod to the vast wealth he accrued boxing and now regularly flaunts.

Mayweather retired for a second time this year after stopping MMA star Conor McGregor to improve his record to 50-0.

Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding showed pictures of the visiting Mayweather admiring and feeding his panda an apple and taking a selfie.

His adopted panda was born in July 2016 and was previously called "Maodou", or soy bean.

Mayweather's donation allows him to visit the panda and have it called by the name he wishes for a year, as well as receive greeting cards "from" the animal.

Mayweather is on a tour of China that is taking in Beijing, Chengdu, Shanghai, Hong Kong and



Macau.

He has not made clear the trip's purpose but implied

on Instagram that he was being paid.

"Coming here with 23

people has been a great experience and it doesn't hurt to get paid \$3,000,000

to simply visit and vacation here in luxury for a few days," Mayweather said in

a posting this week that accompanied a photo of him on the Great Wall.

Novak Djokovic adds Radek Stepanek to his coaching team

Recently-retired Radek Stepanek is joining Andre Agassi to coach Novak Djokovic for the 2018 season.

Djokovic hired Agassi in May to work with him at the grand slams but has been without a touring coach since splitting from long-time mentor Marian Vajda the

same month.

Czech Stepanek, 39, called time on his playing career in November after struggling to recover following back surgery.

He reached a career high of number eight in the world in singles in 2006 and won two grand slam doubles titles and two

Davis Cups.

The pair announced the new arrangement in a live post on Instagram, where they pretended to talk about the possibility of Stepanek coaching Djokovic before the Serb opened a door to reveal the new member of his team.

Radek Stepanek - Credit: PAView photos

Stepanek retired from playing tennis this year Credit: PA

More

Djokovic said: "This is the new team, this is my new man. We are excited for the new season."

Djokovic and Stepanek will begin work together in Monte Carlo, where the former world number one lives, in the coming days as he prepares to make his comeback from an elbow injury.

"Radek is one of my very close friends on the tour and I was always impressed with his level of determination, passion and love for the sport," said Djokovic on novakdjokovic.com.

"He has a lot of experience and knowledge, and he has played on a high level for many years. I am excited to join our forces together and cannot wait to compete again having a new team to back me up

"On Andre's suggestion I pursued Radek, therefore I am sure the two of them will work well together. The new season is about to start and there is a long way to go back to where I left off.

Andre AgassiView photos Andre Agassi (R) will continue to work with Djokovic

More

"We are aware that I need to go step by step, not hurrying anything. I feel much better now, and I can't wait to play matches again."

Although Stepanek's playing career does not compare to Djokovic or Agassi's, the Czech is considered to have one of the sharper tennis brains around.

A quirky character with a game to match, he also stood out on the court for his individual fashion sense. **Yahoo**

Shonga battling competition at Pirates



By Nyambe Lubasi

Chipolopolo striker Justin Shonga has been told to fight harder for his place at Orlando Pirates by club coach Milutin 'Micho' Sredojevic.

Shonga has played just two league games for Pirates since joining the South African club in August from FAZ Super Division club Nkwazi.

"No he is Ok, it is just a case of competition for places," Micho told News Diggers! from Johannesburg.

Shonga failed to make the 2nd placed Pirates in last Sunday's 1-0 away win over 8th positioned Bloemfontein Celtic.

Shonga has not made the team in league action since November 1 when he was an unused substitute in Pirates 3-1 home loss to Mamelodi Sundowns.

However, Shonga later made a Telkom Cup quarterfinal appearance three days after that when Pirates lost at home against Polokwane City before he was substituted the 57th minute.

The Chipolopolo striker was snapped up by Pirates after netting six goals for Zambia between June and August for Zambia.

Moses Sichone is new FAZ technical director

By Nyambe Lubasi

Moses Sichone has made a surprise return home to work for the Football Association of Zambia.

The German-based ex-midfielder who had a difficult relationship with FAZ during his playing career and also shunned Chipolopolo call-ups has been appointed technical director.

"I have accepted this job because of the love I have for Zambia," Sichone said during his unveiling as technical director at Football House in Lusaka. "It is my objective to use this position to help improve the standards of the game. I thank FAZ for entrusting me with such a task."

Sichone began his career at Chambishi before moving to Nchanga Rangers

where he won the league title with the Chingola club in 1998.

He later embarked on a successful professional career in the Bundesliga where he played for three-time German champions FC Koln.

Alemannia Aachen and Kickers Offenbach are the other German clubs the one-time Zambia captain Sichone played for.

Unstoppable Venus sets sights on 2020 Olympics

Evergreen American Venus Williams has dismissed any notion of announcing her retirement anytime soon, saying she is eager to compete at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

The 37-year-old had a successful year in the absence of her sister Serena through pregnancy, climbing to number five in the singles rankings after finishing runner-up at the Australian Open, Wimbledon and the WTA Finals.

The seven-time grand slam winner has competed in five previous Olympics tournaments, starting in 2000, and has won three golds in the women's doubles event with Serena and one gold in the singles competition.

"I have no plans of stopping soon," Williams told American magazine Entrepreneur. "It seems somehow that 2020 Tokyo is on the horizon. Isn't that wild? I'm trying to stick around for that."

The Williams sisters along with ATP Tour veterans Roger Federer and Rafa Nadal have re-established their dominance at the top of the sport with Serena winning her 23rd grand slam title aged 35 at the 2017 Australian Open.

Spaniard Nadal, 31, reclaimed the men's number one spot with six trophies this year, while 36-year-old Federer finished second after winning seven titles. The pair split the season's four grand slams between them.

The sisters will resume their rivalry next season as Serena is expected to make a long-awaited return following the birth of her daughter in September. *Yahoo*



FAZ ADDS FRENZY TO LEAGUE CLIMAX

By Nyambe Lubasi

The 2017 FAZ Super Division trophy will be delivered by air mail to the champions just after the final whistle this Saturday. Leaders Zesco United including defending champions Zanaco and 3rd placed Green Buffaloes are in a tight race for the 2017 title that will be decided this

weekend.

Zesco have 71 points, one ahead of Zanaco and Buffaloes who are separated only on goal difference heading into this weekend final games of the league campaign.

FAZ will station a helicopter between Lusaka and the Copperbelt to deliver the trophy to the eventual champions

immediately after the final whistle.

"A helicopter will be on standby at the midway point in Kapiri Mposhi with the trophy that will be flown to the eventual champions after the final whistle," Zesco media officer Katebe Chengo said.

"So there will be a 30 minute wait for the champions after the match to receive the

trophy."

Zesco will be home in Ndola to play Mufulira Wanderers at Levy Mwanawasa Stadium.

Zanaco and Buffaloes will be home too and will hosts Forest Rangers and Green Eagles at Sunset Stadium and Woodlands Stadium respectively.

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